

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-10 CU-02 OMB-01 EA-06 EB-07 COME-00

TRSE-00 AGR-05 CIEP-01 /104 W
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R 261233Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 1160

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1346

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, SS, SP, MO, UN

SUBJ: SAHARA DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A. MADRID 978; B. MADRID A-27, 12 FEB 75

1. FURTHER TO REFS A AND B ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SAHARA AND EMBASSY ANALYSIS, DIRGEN FOR PROMOTION OF SAHARA IN PRESIDENCY PROVIDED FOLLOWING INFO TO EMBOFF FEB 24.

2. DIRGEN SHOWED EMBOFF COMPLETED CENSUS TAKEN IN FALL 1974 SAYING THAT HE HOPED THAT IT COULD BE MADE PUBLIC. TOTAL INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF SAHARA WAS 74,902 (INCL 450 NON-SPANISH ALIENS). ACCORDING TO DIRGEN THERE WERE APPROX 18,000 SPANIARDS OVER AND ABOVE THIS FIGURE INCLUDING WIVES AND FAMILIES OF OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS. EIGHTY PERCENT OF SAHARANS ARE SEDENTARY AND THE REMAINDER NOMADS. CENSUS HAS
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VERY DETAILED BREAKDOWN BY TRIBE OF NUMBERS OF SEDENTARY

AND NOMAD MEMBERS OF EACH TRIBE, AND THEIR LOCATION. CENSUS WAS PREPARED AS BASIS FOR HOLDING REFERENDUM WHICH SPAIN COMMITTED ITSELF TO HOLD IN FIRST HALF OF 1975. DIRGEN CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT REFERENDUM WOULD NOT BE HELD AS SCHEDULED BUT ONLY AFTER HANDING DOWN OF ADVISORY OPINION BY ICJ AND SUBSEQUENT UN RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. ASKED ABOUT POLITICAL MEETING HELD IN EL AIIUN FEB 17, DIRGEN SAID THAT APPROX 2,500 SAHARANS HAD TAKEN PART IN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF SAHARAN NATIONAL UNION, A POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTED TO INDEPENDENCE. HE SAID THAT PRESS REPORTS ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF 5,000 WERE FALSE. IN COURSE OF MEETING REPS OF THE MORE RADICAL INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT KNOWN AS THE "FRONT FOR THE LIBERALIZATION OF THE SAHARA AND RIO DE ORO" (FPOLISARIO) ALSO WERE ALLOWED TO SPEAK EVEN THOUGH THEY REPRESENT A GROUPING WHICH ADVOCATED SAHARAN INDEPENDENCE "TOMORROW" RATHER THAN OVER THE MEAN TERM. BOTH GROUPS WERE MADE UP OF YOUNGER MEMBERS OF TRIBES WHO OBJECTED TO LEADERSHIP BY TRADITIONAL TRIBAL LEADERS AND WHO SOUGHT INDEPENDENCE FREE FROM ANY HEGEMONY BY MOROCCO. ASKED WHY GOS ALLOWED SUCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD, DIRGEN REPLIED THAT GOS HAD COMMITTED ITSELF TO PREPARE AREA FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND, IN ANTICIPATION OF VISIT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE DESIGNATED BY COMMITTEE OF 24 AT UN, WANTED TO HAVE EVIDENCE THAT RESIDENTS OF AREA WERE FREE TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES POLITICALLY AND PROMOTE THEIR OWN GOALS. (IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT POLITICAL MEETINGS IN THE SAHARA PROBABLY WAS THE LARGEST POLITICAL MEETING HELD ON SPANISH TERRITORY IN MANY YEARS. IT HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED IN SPAIN WHERE GOVT IS TRYING TO GET STARTED WITH LIMITED POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.)

4. DIRGEN DESCRIBED COUNCIL OF GOVT (REFTEL) AS SHADOW ORGANIZATION WHICH WORKED UNDER DIRECTION OF GOVERNOR GENERAL AS MEANS OF PREPARING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TO RUN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS INVARIOUS PUBLIC SERVICES. FOUR ADVISORS TO COUNCIL HAD BEEN ELECTED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SAHARA IN SPECIAL SESSION FEB 6-8; THREE OTHER MEMBERS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR GENERAL. EACH ONE WILL WORK TOGETHER WITH A KEY SPANISH OFFICIAL TO LEARN HOW TO SUPERVISE A GIVEN DEPARTMENT. DIRGEN EMPHASIZED THAT, CONTRARY TO ALLEGATIONS BY MOROCCO, GOS WAS NOT SETTING UP A LOCAL SAHARAN CONFIDENTIAL

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GOVERNMENT.

5. DIRGEN EXPRESSED HIS OPINION THAT INDEPENDENCE OF SAHARA WAS NOT VIABLE OPTION (REFAIR). FOR THIS REASON, IT WAS NECESSARY THAT SPAIN SOMEHOW HAVE A SERIOUS DIALOGUE WITH MOROCCO ABOUT SAHARA'S FUTURE AND OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES. UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAID, MOROCCO, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE OF AN INSECURE INTERNAL SITUATION, HAD SOUGHT TO DIVERT PUBLIC ATTENTION BY INTRODUCING ITS DEMANDS FOR CEUTA,

MELILLA AND OTHER PRESIDIOS. DIRGEN SAID THIS ACTION NOT ONLY CREATED INCREASED TENSION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES BUT ALSO INCREASED RISK OF INTERNAL DISSENTION AND UNBRIDLED NATIONALIST FEELING BOTH IN MOROCCO AND IN SPAIN.

6. DIRGEN ESTIMATED THAT MOROCCO TOOK HARD LINE WITH SPAIN BECAUSE IT FELT THAT IT COULD COUNT ON U.S. SUPPORT. U.S. NEEDED COOPERATIVE ARAB INTERLOCUTOR IN EFFORTS TO COPE WITH ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION WHICH SEEMED TO TAKE PRIORITY IN U.S. INTERESTS, HE SAID. SO FAR, HE ADDED, U.S. HAD SHOWN BY ITS VOTES IN DECEMBER 1974 IN UNGA AND SHIPMENT OF TANKS TO RABAT THAT IT WANTED TO NURTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO BELIEVING THAT "NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED SPAIN WOULD NEVER OPT FOR A LEFTIST, NON-WESTERN POLITICAL POSTURE." EMBOFF REPLIED THAT U.S. HAD CONSISTENTLY URGED ALL INTERESTED PARTIES IN SAHARAN ISSUE TO SEEK SOLUTION IN CONFORMITY WITH UN RESOLUTIONS AND THROUGH DIALOGUE, AVOIDING AT ALL COSTS EXACERBATION OF ISSUE BY UNILATERAL ACTION OF HOSTILE CHARACTER. U.S. COULD NOT FAIRLY BE ACCUSED OF TAKING SIDES, BUT ONLY OF CONCERN TO PRESERVE PEACE AND ORDERLY CHANGE IN AREA.

7. AMBUSHES AND INCIDENTS HAPPEN FROM TIME TO TIME, ACCORDING TO DIRGEN, BUT WERE NOT SERIOUS. GOS WAS AWARE, HOWEVER, OF MOROCCAN TRAINING OF INSURGENTS. IT HAD ALSO LEARNED THAT ONE OF LEADERS OF ANTI-SPANISH INSURGENCY IN MID-SIXTIES IN EARLIER COMBATS AROUND IFNI HAD RECENTLY BEEN RELEASED BY ALGERIA AND HAD BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF ONE OF THESE INSURGENT GROUPS.

8. SOME 40 SAHARANS WERE UNDERGOING UNIVERSITY TRAINING AT THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES IN MADRID. GOS LOOKED TO THESE PEOPLE TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP OF VARIOUS POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES INAS MUCH AS SAHARA LACKED TRAINED CADRE PERSONNEL. SOME OF THESE STUDENTS, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY CONFIDENTIAL

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ALGERIANS WHO HAD SUPPLIED THEM WITH "REVOLUTIONARY MATERIAL". DIRGEN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SOME OF THESE STUDENTS MIGHT BE POLITICIZED WITH EXTREMIST IDEAS BUT ON THE WHOLE FELT THAT THEY WOULD CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TO A NEW SAHARAN LEADERSTIP.

9. DIRGEN CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT PHOSPHATE PRODUCTION AT BU CRAA EXCEEDED 3.5 MILLION TONS IN 1974. JAPAN WAS PRINCIPAL FOREIGN PURCHASER (320,000 TONS) FOLLOWED BY FRG (120,000 TONS). SPAIN ITSELF IMPORTED 1.5 MILLION TONS. OUTPUT IN 1974 WAS CONSIDERABLY ABOVE EARLIER ESTIMATES AND DIRGEN CONFIRMED EMBASSY IMPRESSION THAT SABOTAGE OF TRANSMISSION BELT IN OCTOBER 1974 HAD NOT APPRECIABLY AFFECTED PRODUCTION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF PHOSPHATES.

10. COMMENT: AS INDICATED IN REFTTEL, GOS HAS TAKEN ANOTHER

STEP TO MOBILIZE SAHARAN OPINION BEHIND IDEA OF EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE. SPANISH AMBASSADOR IN UN HAS ASKED THAT UN COMMITTEE OF 24 ON DECOLONIZATION SEND INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE TO SAHARA IN APRIL. GOS SEEMINGLY IS ANXIOUS TO PUT ON BEST FRONT WITH RESPECT TO ITS FULFILLMENT OF OBLIGATIONS UNDER UN CHARTER TO CARRY OUT DECOLONIZATION AND AT SAME TIME TO INSURE THAT SAHARANS THEMSELVES ARE CONSULTED ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. THESE SPANISH ACTIONS SUCH AS PROMOTING A LOCAL INDEPENDENT PARTY, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY UN COMMITTEE WHEN IT RECEIVES ICJ ADVISORY OPINION AND HAS TO DECIDE WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH IT. AT CURRENT PRICES, SPANISH OUTPUT OF PHOSPHATES IN 1974 WOULD BE WORTH APPROX \$225 MILLION MAKING IT A CONSIDERABLE SOURCE OF HARD CURRENCY EARNINGS. JUDGING BY SPANISH PROGRESS IN RAISING PRODUCTION FROM YEAR TO YEAR, BU CRAA SHOULD ACHIEVE ITS MAXIMUM OUTPUT OF 10 MILLION TONS IN PERHAPS TWO TO THREE YEARS. EATON

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